



Oregon

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Water Resources Department

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission

FROM: Brenda Bateman, Senior Policy Coordinator

SUBJECT: Agenda Item J, February 8, 2013
Water Resources Commission Meeting

Legislative Preview – 2013 Session

I. Introduction

During January 2013, Oregon's 77th Legislative Assembly convened in Salem. This Legislative preview includes information about session basics (length, logistics, etc.), changes in legislative leadership, and water-related bills in the queue.

II. Session Basics

In odd-numbered years, the Oregon Legislative Assembly convenes on the second Monday in January, to swear-in newly elected officials, elect legislative leaders, adopt rules, organize and appoint committees, and begin introducing bills. Legislative session, including committee hearings, begins in February.

Also in odd-numbered years, sessions may not exceed 160 days, unless five-day extensions are approved by a two-thirds vote in each house. During the 2013 session, legislative leadership has announced its intent to adjourn Sine Die by June 28. The Constitutional deadline to adjourn Sine Die, given the 160 day restriction, is July 13, 2013.

Policy bills and budget bills will make their way through the process throughout the Spring, and will generally follow the timeline below:

February – April Hearings and Public Work Sessions

April 8 – Deadline for Chairs to schedule Work Sessions for Measures in the First Chamber

April 18 – Deadline for Committees to hold Work Sessions for Measures in the First Chamber

May 20 – Deadline for Chairs to schedule Work Sessions for Measures in the Second Chamber

May 31 – Deadline for Committees to hold Work Sessions for Measures in the Second Chamber

III. Changes in Legislative Leadership for 2013

The State of Oregon has a Citizen Legislature consisting of the Senate, whose 30 members are elected to serve four-year terms, and the House of Representatives, which has 60 members elected for two-year terms. The Democrats hold a clear majority in the 2013 Legislature. Sixteen of the 30 Senators are Democrats, as are 34 of the 60 representatives.

Senator Peter Courtney returns as President of the Senate, while Representative Tina Kotek takes on a new role as Speaker of the House.

The Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee is one of the Committees that handles environmental policy for the Oregon State Senate. It will again be chaired by Senator Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland). Her committee is comprised of:

- Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland), Chair
- Alan Olsen (R-Canby), Vice Chair
- Mark Hass (D-Beaverton)
- Alan Bates (D-Medford)
- Bill Hansell (R-Pendleton)

The House Energy and Environment Committee is one of the committees that handles environmental policy for the Oregon House of Representatives. It will again be chaired by Representative Jules Bailey. The new committee roster follows:

- Jules Bailey (D-Portland), Chair
- Debbie Boone (D-Cannon Beach), Vice Chair
- Mark Johnson (R-Hood River), Vice Chair
- Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario)
- Michael Dembrow (D-Portland)
- Jeff Reardon (D-Happy Valley)
- Jim Weidner (R-Yamhill)
- Gail Whitsett (R-Klamath Falls)
- Jessica Vega Pederson (D-Portland)

Natural Resources Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee handles budget and fiscal matters for the natural resources arena. It is comprised of members of both the Senate and House. The new subcommittee roster follows:

- Sen. Chris Edwards (D-Eugene), Co-Chair
- Sen. Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland)
- Sen. Chuck Thomsen (R-Welches)
- Rep. Ben Unger (D-Hillsboro), Co-Chair
- Rep. Jules Bailey (D-Portland)
- Rep. Bruce Hanna (R-Roseburg)

This committee will meet to consider to the Department's budget, as well as any other water-related bills that have a potential fiscal impact to the state. The committee will likely host the Department's budget hearings, inviting Department presentations and public testimony early in the Spring.

IV. Water-Related Bills in the Queue

Previously, the staff has discussed the content of agency bills with the Water Resources Commission, building Commission suggestions and ideas into the text of the language itself and into related workgroup processes. Like WRD, the Dept. of Environmental Quality, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, and Dept. of Agriculture have developed about half a dozen bills each. Most of the other natural resource agencies will carry between one and four bills in their 2013 portfolio.

The Governor has forwarded all six of the Department's bills as part of his 2013 Legislative Portfolio. Assigned to their Senate and House Chambers, the bills have new official numbers:

House Bill 2257 (Formerly LC 657) Authority to Change a Name on a Water Right Certificate
House Bill 2258 (Formerly LC 658) Establish a Water Supply Development Program
House Bill 2259 (Formerly LC 661) Water Right Transactions Fee Schedule – Remove Sunset

Senate Bill 217 (Formerly LC 659) Establish a Water Right Management Fee
Senate Bill 199 (Formerly LC 660) Split Season Leasing – Remove Program Sunset
Senate Bill 200 (Formerly LC 662) Split a Permit into Multiple Ownerships

For each of these bills, the Department has provided bill language and a bill summary on-line. Go to: http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/pages/law/legislative_updates.aspx. Throughout the session, staff will post updates, including Department testimony and amendments, whenever possible.

The Department's budget bills are:

Senate Bill 5547 Appropriates money from General Fund to Department. Bonding money for water supply development is also in this bill.
Senate Bill 5506 General obligation bonds, revenue bonds, certificates of participation and other financing agreements for biennium. Bonding money for loans to the Umatilla Basin is also in this bill.

In addition, the Department is aware of a number of other water-related bills, including:

- Several focused on the development of in-conduit hydroelectric projects.
- A requirement for environmental review of water right transfers
- A request to recapitalize the Deschutes Mitigation Bank
- A bill that would remove WRD from the business of wave energy permitting
- Designation of additional state scenic waterways, and
- Additional restrictions on placer mining / suction dredging.

These and other bills will come from individual or groups of legislators and may be the focus of upcoming legislative hearings, where the Department will testify.